

For Immediate Release
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Voter ID Bill Passes Texas House ***Representative Aliseda Closes Debate on Bill***

AUSTIN, TX: On March 23, 2011, Representative Jose Aliseda (R-Beeville) received the rare (for a Freshman Legislator) and great honor of closing out debate on Senate Bill 14, the Voter Photo ID Bill.

"It was truly a privilege to be the final Republican speaker in favor of SB 14," said Aliseda. "The House Leadership asked me to be the final speaker for this bill and, in particular, to emphasize my personal experience in prosecuting voter fraud and my support of a strong Voter ID bill as an immigrant to this country."

The Texas House began debate around 10 a.m. Wednesday morning and continued debate on SB 14 until just after 11 p.m. After many amendments and parliamentary tactics to kill the bill by those who opposed it, the House passed the bill by a margin of 101-48.

"Protecting the integrity of the ballot box was forefront in the minds of voters in House District 35 and was one of my core campaign issues. I'm honored that I was able to play a role in helping it pass the Texas House. As a former county attorney who prosecuted voter fraud, I know this bill will be a giant step forward in returning confidence to the public and strengthening the security of our election process," Aliseda concluded.

Representative Aliseda is a first term Republican from Bee County. House District 35 consists of Atascosa, Bee, Goliad, Jim Wells, Karnes, Live Oak and McMullen Counties.

Below is the text of Aliseda's closing Speech:

It is such an honor to be standing up here representing my District as its State Representative, supporting Representative Harless and this Voter ID Bill. As I stated earlier today, I am a Mexican immigrant. I came to this country at the age of four and became a United States citizen at the age of 17. I want to show you what they use in Mexico to vote. This a Mexican federally-issued biometric ID card. It has on the front a picture and vital information, and on the back a magnetic strip containing more information and a fingerprint.

I am a proud American now, and using an ID to vote just makes common sense here and now. You need an ID to do anything in today's society: to cash a check, to open a bank account, to do something as simple as rent a movie; why not to vote? Americans expect it. Americans want it. They want it because they want to believe that their voting system is at least as safe as renting a movie at Blockbuster.

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Do I believe that there are some Americans who do not vote because they feel it is useless because of fraud? Yes. How do I know? Because they have told me so.

I served 5 years of my life as United States Naval Officer. I did not do that so some dead person could vote or so that Mickey Mouse, registered by ACORN, could vote.

I served my home county, Bee County, as its County Attorney for 8 years. In 1990, as a young Democrat County Attorney, I investigated and I prosecuted voter fraud cases. I actually got convictions. I did not do that just to bring the perpetrators to justice. I did it, primarily, because my citizens needed to believe that they had clean and fair elections, and that someone was fighting for that. That is exactly why I strongly support this bill.

My District is comprised of seven counties South of San Antonio and West of Corpus Christi. According to 2008 statistics, in one county, Goliad County, I had more people registered to vote than persons eligible to vote. Under current law, the opportunity for fraud is there.

In 2008, a high water mark for voter registration, Texas had an overall registration rate of 76 percent of eligible voters.

In McMullen County, one of my counties, in 2008, had a voter registration of 97.9%, 21.4 percent above the state average. The opportunity for fraud is probably there.

In Jim Wells County, also one of my counties, and the home of the infamous Box 13, in 2008, had an eligible voter registration of 90.44% or 14 percent above the state average. The opportunity for fraud is probably there.

In 2004, in Bee County, we had a woman cast a ballot as if she were her deceased mother.

In 2007, the Texas State Auditor's Office found that Texas had 49,049 registered voters who may have been ineligible to vote. Of those, there were 23,500 voters on the rolls who may have been deceased. Would Voter ID possibly have stopped them if they had tried to vote? I think so.

There were 2,359 voters identified as having duplicate records. I believe Voter ID would have helped there also.

In the Voter ID committee hearing, I heard testimony from election officials that in-person voter fraud had actually occurred and that they had witnessed it. They testified that they had voters show up with multiple registration cards. Do I believe that fraud has occurred? Yes.

I believe that the majority of the constituents in my district: Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, want this and I intend to vote for it and I ask that you do so also.